

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Tennessee Apparel Corp.

Tennessee Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Tennessee Apparel Corporation Achieves Iso 9000:2000 Registration

Client Profile:

Tennessee Apparel Corporation, established in 1907, is a privately held small manufacturer employing 20 full-time workers plus seasonal part-time labor as needed. The company manufactures protective clothing, primarily for the U.S. military. Products include cold weather parkas, slacks, and related items, as well as other gear designed to protect our armed forces from the effects of nature and hostile actions. The company is located in Tullahoma, Tennessee, a small community in the south central part of the state.

Situation:

Tennessee Apparel Corporation (TAC)'s major client is the Department of Defense (DoD). DoD contracting and quality assurance personnel told TAC that in order to continue doing business with the government, the company needed to comply with current ISO 9000-series quality standards. TAC contacted the Tennessee Manufacturing Extension Partnership (TMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

Solution:

A team of TMEP Quality Management Systems (QMS) consultants developed a custom-tailored QMS program for TAC, and provided extensive hands-on assistance including training, mentoring, and working alongside company personnel. The assistance provided by TMEP ensured that the company developed a quality management system that provided essential guidance to its employees and that met the government's requirements for documentation and continuous improvement. As TAC began implementing the requirements for ISO, it found that its processes became more efficient and that these improvements had a direct impact on the company's bottom line.

Shortly after completing its project with TMEP, TAC received its ISO 9000:2000 certification. Armed with this certification, the company bid for and won a seven-year, \$137 million contract with the Department of Defense.

Results:

Achieved ISO 9000:2000 certification.

Saving ongoing labor and material costs of at least 2 percent per year.

Reduced inventory of raw materials and finished goods by \$40,000 as a one-time savings.

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Won a seven year, \$137 million contract to produce protective clothing for the Department of Defense.

Testimonial:

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